



INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(51) International Patent Classification ⁶ : A61F 13/15		A1	(11) International Publication Number: WO 95/17869 (43) International Publication Date: 6 July 1995 (06.07.95)
(21) International Application Number: PCT/SE94/01258 (22) International Filing Date: 27 December 1994 (27.12.94)		(81) Designated States: AU, CA, CN, CZ, FI, HU, JP, NO, NZ, PL, SK, US, European patent (AT, BE, CH, DE, DK, ES, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE).	
(30) Priority Data: 9304320-6 29 December 1993 (29.12.93) SE		Published <i>With international search report.</i> <i>With amended claims and statement.</i>	
(71) Applicant (<i>for all designated States except US</i>): MÖLNLYCKE AB [SE/SE]; S-405 03 Gothenburg (SE).			
(72) Inventors; and (75) Inventors/Applicants (<i>for US only</i>): GUIDOTTI, Ted [SE/SE]; Anneholmsgatan 10, S-412 67 Gothenburg (SE). STEGER, Christina [SE/SE]; Vedskärsvägen 11, S-423 40 Torslunda (SE). WIDLUND, Urban [SE/SE]; Päronvägen 5, S-435 43 Mölnlycke (SE). ÖSTERDAHL, Eje [SE/SE]; Rödingsgatan 13, S-426 58 Västra Frölunda (SE).			
(74) Agents: BERG, Sven, Anders et al.; H. Albihns Patentbyrå AB, Box 3137, S-103 62 Stockholm (SE).			
(54) Title: ABSORBENT BODY IN AN ABSORBENT PRODUCT			
<p>The diagram illustrates a cross-section of an absorbent body. It features a top layer labeled 11, which is divided into two distinct regions: 11a and 11b. Below layer 11 is a layer labeled 13. Layer 13 is situated above a larger, central rectangular area labeled 12, which represents the liquid storage portion. At the bottom of the diagram is a layer labeled 14, which appears to be a textured or woven fabric.</p>			
(57) Abstract			
<p>An absorbent body in an absorbent product such as a diaper, incontinence pad, sanitary napkin or the like and which comprises a liquid acquisition portion (11, 13) and a liquid storage portion (12) adjacent thereto. The liquid acquisition portion has a cover layer (11) which covers at least substantial portions of the liquid storage portion (12) and at least one portion (13) which is located at the assumed wetting area of the absorbent body and extends into the underlying liquid storage portion (12). The material in the liquid acquisition portion (11, 13) has a mean pore size which is greater than the mean pore size of the liquid storage portion (12). The absorbent body has a high instantaneous absorption, even upon repeated wetting, and a low rewetting.</p>			

FOR THE PURPOSES OF INFORMATION ONLY

Codes used to identify States party to the PCT on the front pages of pamphlets publishing international applications under the PCT.

AT	Austria	GB	United Kingdom	MR	Mauritania
AU	Australia	GE	Georgia	MW	Malawi
BB	Barbados	GN	Guinea	NE	Niger
BE	Belgium	GR	Greece	NL	Netherlands
BF	Burkina Faso	HU	Hungary	NO	Norway
BG	Bulgaria	IE	Ireland	NZ	New Zealand
BJ	Benin	IT	Italy	PL	Poland
BR	Brazil	JP	Japan	PT	Portugal
BY	Belarus	KE	Kenya	RO	Romania
CA	Canada	KG	Kyrgyzstan	RU	Russian Federation
CF	Central African Republic	KP	Democratic People's Republic of Korea	SD	Sudan
CG	Congo	KR	Republic of Korea	SE	Sweden
CH	Switzerland	KZ	Kazakhstan	SI	Slovenia
CI	Côte d'Ivoire	LI	Liechtenstein	SK	Slovakia
CM	Cameroon	LK	Sri Lanka	SN	Senegal
CN	China	LU	Luxembourg	TD	Chad
CS	Czechoslovakia	LV	Latvia	TG	Togo
CZ	Czech Republic	MC	Monaco	TJ	Tajikistan
DE	Germany	MD	Republic of Moldova	TT	Trinidad and Tobago
DK	Denmark	MG	Madagascar	UA	Ukraine
ES	Spain	ML	Mali	US	United States of America
FI	Finland	MN	Mongolia	UZ	Uzbekistan
FR	France			VN	Viet Nam
GA	Gabon				

Absorbent body in an absorbent productTechnical area

The present invention relates to an absorbent body in an absorbent product, such as a diaper, incontinence pad, sanitary napkin or the like and comprises a fluid acquisition portion and a fluid storage portion adjacent thereto.

The background of the invention

An absorbent body for absorbent products such as disposable diapers, incontinence protectors and sanitary napkins is usually constructed of one or more layers of hydrophilic fibres, e.g. cellulose fluff. Furthermore, so-called superabsorbents are often included, which are polymers with the capacity to absorb many times their own weight in water or bodily fluid. Furthermore, additional components can sometimes be included in the absorbent body in order to improve, for example, its fluid spreading properties or to increase its coherence and ability to resist deformation during use.

A major problem, primarily in adult diapers and incontinence protectors intended to receive and absorb relatively large quantities of fluid, is that they often leak before their total absorbent capacity is completely used up. Since during urination, large quantities of fluid are often expelled during a few seconds, it is not uncommon that this results in the absorbent body being temporarily locally saturated with urine in the so-called fluid acquisition zone, when there is not enough time for the urine to be spread out to the other portions of the absorbent body and thus any more urine expelled will leak out of the diaper. Such early leakage is, of course, a great source of irritation for both the user and his

caretaker. The leakage problem is accentuated upon repeated wetting.

Another problem is keeping the surface facing the user as dry as possible during the entire use and preventing so-called re-wetting, i.e. that already absorbed fluid is pressed back out of the absorbent body and wets the skin of the user or gives rise to leakage. To a certain extent, these re-wetting problems are alleviated if the absorbent body contains superabsorbents, which chemically bond the absorbed fluid even when the product has been subjected to external pressure, for example when the user sits down. One difficulty is, however, to design the absorbent body in such a way that the fluid is spread from the wetting area to unused portions of the absorbent body.

International patent application PCT/SE92/00078 describes an absorbent body comprising at least two different cellulose fluffs, the fibre structure in the first absorbent layer substantially consisting of a first type of fluff with an open fibre structure and low liquid dispersability, for example a cellulose fluff made chemothermo-mechanically, and a fibre structure in the other absorbent layer essentially consisting of a second type of fluff with higher liquid dispersability than the fluff in the first absorbent layer, for example a chemically produced fluff. The first layer can, by virtue of its open fibre structure, house much liquid between the fibres and therefore can receive large amounts of liquid during a short period of time, i.e. it has a high momentaneous liquid absorption capacity. The other layer, which has a higher liquid dispersability than the first layer, is able to drain liquid from the first layer and spread it to the other layer.

EP-A-0,254,476 discloses an absorbent body, which in one zone essentially in front of the wetting area, has a lower surface weight and a lower density than the surrounding portions of the absorbent body. This provides
5 an area with high momentaneous liquid absorption capacity, whereafter the liquid can be dispersed and stored in the surrounding areas of the absorbent body.

GB-A-2,082,643 describes an absorbent body with an
10 essential uniform surface weight but with a density gradient in the longitudinal direction, so that the density increases towards the short sides of the absorbent body. This provides rapid liquid admittance in the central portion of the absorbent body out towards the
15 more compressed end portions.

US-A-4,413,996 describes an absorbent body for a diaper having a liquid absorbing depression or well in the wetting area. In this well, a porous batt can possibly be
20 arranged.

There is, however, still room for improvement as regards liquid absorption capacity and dispersability, especially in products intended to be able to receive large
25 quantities of liquid during a short period of time, which is often the case in, for example, incontinence products for adults. Another goal is that the surface of the absorbent body facing the user must be felt to be dry and comfortable, even after repeated wetting.

30

The purpose and essential features of the invention
The purpose of the present invention is to provide an absorbent body of the type described by way of introduction, which fulfills the goals, i.e. which can rapidly receive large quantities of liquid by wicking even upon repeated wetting, and disperse the liquid by wicking towards the unused portions of the absorbent body, and

which also has a high surface dryness. This has been achieved by virtue of the fact that said liquid acquisition portion comprises at least one well located at the assumed wetting area of the absorbent body and extending depthwise into and through the liquid storage portion and is in liquid communication with a wicking layer arranged under the liquid storage layer, and in that in the liquid acquisition portion, there is arranged a first absorbent structure, which has a first effective mean pore size, and that in the liquid storage portion, there is arranged a second absorbent structure which has a second effective mean pore size which is less than the first mean pore size.

15 Description of drawings

Fig. 1 shows a plan view of a diaper as seen from the side facing the user.

Fig. 2 shows a plan view of an absorbent body in the diaper according to Fig. 1.

20 Fig. 3 is a section along the line III-III in Fig. 2.

Figs. 4 and 5 are corresponding sections but through alternative embodiments of the absorbent body.

Fig. 6 shows a plan view of another absorbent body.

Fig. 7 is a section along the line VII-VII in Fig. 6.

25 Fig. 8 shows a plan view of still another absorbent body.

Fig. 9 is a section along line IX-IX in Fig. 8.

Fig. 10 shows in the form of a stack diagram the momentaneous absorption of an absorbent body (B) according to the invention and another absorbent body

30 (A).

Description of examples

The diaper shown in Fig. 1 comprises a liquid permeable cover layer 1, for example of fibre fabric or perforated plastic film, a liquid impermeable cover layer 2, for example of plastic film or hydrophobic fibre fabric, and

an absorbent body 3 enclosed between the two cover layers 1 and 2.

5 The diaper is intended to enclose the lower portion of the user's torso as a pair of absorbent pants. It has a rear portion 4 intended to face the rear of the user, a front portion intended to face the front of the user, and a narrower crotch portion 6 between the back portion 4 and the front portion 5. In order to be able to join the 10 diaper together to the desired pant shape, tape tabs 7 are arranged adjacent the rear waist edge 8 of the diaper. The tape tabs 7 are fixed when used against the exterior of the front portion 5 of the diaper, close to the front waist edge 9, thus holding the diaper together about the waist of the user. Other fastening means, such 15 as Velcro®, hooks and the like are of course also conceivable.

20 Furthermore, the diaper according to Fig. 1 comprises pretensioned elastic means 10, which can consist of a suitable material, such as elastic foam, elastic tape or thread-wound elastic cords. For the sake of simplicity, the cords are shown in Fig. 1 in their extended state. As soon as the tension is released, the elastic means will 25 contract and thereby form the elastic leg bands of the diaper.

30 It should be pointed out here that the diaper shown in the drawing and described above is in no way a limiting example. Thus, the shape of the diaper as well as its other design features can be varied. For example, for diapers intended to be worn inside a special pair of fixing pants, the fastening means, i.e. the tape tabs 7, can be eliminated as can possibly the elastic means 10 as 35 well.

With reference to the example shown in Fig. 4, the absorbent body 3 of the diaper is composed of a number of different parts. Essentially directly in front of the assumed wetting area of the diaper, which is the area of 5 the diaper which is first struck by the emitted urine, and which is usually displaced somewhat towards the front portion of the diaper, the absorbent body 3 has a liquid acquisition well 13 which extends into and straight through a surrounding liquid storage layer 12. The well 10 13 can rapidly receive great amounts of liquid during a short period of time. Beneath the storage layer 12 and the well 13, there is a wicking layer 14 consisting of a fibre material with high liquid dispersability.

15 The fibre material in the well 13 can consist, for example, of cellulose fibres of mechanical pulp, thermo-mechanical pulp, or chemo-thermo-mechanical pulp, so-called CTMP. These pulps have relatively coarse fibres with remaining lignin, and therefore they have relatively 20 large pore volume, high wet resilience and low liquid dispersability. High wet resilience means that the fluff pulp essentially retains its structure even after wetting. Other fluff pulps with similar properties can be used, for example Southern Pine or chemically stiffened 25 cellulose fibres, as well as synthetic fibres.

According to the example shown in Figs. 3 and 5, there is arranged on top of the storage layer 12 a cover layer 11, which together with the well 13 forms the liquid 30 acquisition portion of the absorbent body. The cover layer 11 and the well 13 can, as shown, be integrated with each other and thus consist of the same material. They can, however, also consist of different materials, both of which should, however, have the desired properties, such as relatively large pore size, high wet 35 resilience and low liquid dispersability. The cover layer increases the surface dryness of the absorbent body.

The cover layer 11 has, in the embodiment shown in Fig. 3, a thicker rear portion 11a, as seen in the position of use of the absorbent body, said thicker portion changing, at a certain distance from the well 13, 5 preferably 5-50 mm, to a thinner portion 11b. The thinner portion 11b has a higher density than the thicker portion 11a and therefore functions as a liquid barrier preventing liquid from being spread towards the rear portion 11a of the cover layer 11, which is thus kept dry. An 10 additional advantage is that urine and faeces are kept separate from each other. Mixing of urine and faeces results in the formation of undesirable decomposition products, which can cause skin irritation. The well 13 can, of course, also be completely surrounded by such a 15 barrier 11a of the cover layer 11. The higher density of the portion 11b is automatically obtained by compression of the absorbent body, thanks to the reversed thickness ratio of the underlying storage layer 11, presupposing that it has a higher resistance to compression than the 20 cover layer 11. A compressed barrier strip 11b next to the well 13 can of course be achieved in other manners.

The example shown in Fig. 4 lacks the cover layer 11.

25 According to the example shown in Fig. 5, there is between the well 13 and the wicking layer 14 a liquid acquisition layer 19. This should consist of a material with a high liquid receptability and wet resilience, i.e. it should retain an open fibre structure even in a wet 30 state. Examples of suitable materials are synthetic fibre material, e.g. in the form of a wet, polymer form material, cellulose fibres of mechanical pulp, thermo-mechanical pulp, chemo-thermo-mechanical pulp (so-called CTMP) or chemically stiffened cellulose fibres. The layer 35 19 can also consist of a material which swells upon wetting, e.g. compressed dry formed sheet pulp.

5 The fibre material in the storage layer 12 should substantially consist of fluff pulp or other fibre material with relatively small pore volume and high liquid dispersability. Fluff pulps made chemically, which consist of fine fibres of essentially pure cellulose, have in general good liquid dispersability. Even fluff pulp of, for example, CTMP compressed to a density of over about 0.12 g/cm³ has relatively good liquid dispersion properties.

10

Another material with good liquid dispersion properties is compressed dry-formed sheet pulp of for example CTMP or chemical pulp. Such materials are described in WO 90/0508.

15

The fibre material in the wicking layer 14 should consist substantially of chemical fluff pulp, dry-formed sheet pulp according to the above or other fibre material with good dispersion properties.

20

The density in the liquid acquisition portion 11, 13 should be between 0.02 and 0.2 g/cm³, and preferably between 0.06 and 0.15 g/cm³. The density in the storage layer 12 should be between 0.1 and 1.0 g/cm³, preferably between 0.12 and 0.6 g/cm³. The density in the wicking layer 14 should be 0.08-1.0 g/cm³, and preferably 0.12-0.6 g/cm³. The density values given above apply for absorbent bodies of cellulose fluff pulp. For other types of absorbent materials, other densities can be suitable.

25

30 The difference in pore size between the liquid acquisition portion 11, 13, on one hand, and the storage layer 12 and the wicking layer 14, on the other hand, can be achieved by a difference in density between the layers, but even at the same density, but with different types of fibre materials, the desired pore size difference can be achieved.

35

The liquid acquisition portion 11, 13 contains between 0 and 30%, preferably between 2 and 15% of superabsorbent, computed on the total dry weight of the portion. The superabsorbent, in the form of flakes, fibres, granules, 5 powder or the like, is preferably mixed with the fibre material, either substantially evenly distributed or in such a manner that certain portions can contain a higher proportion of superabsorbent than others. Its purpose is to absorb and bind any liquid which remains in the liquid 10 acquisition portion 11, 13, even after it has been drained by the storage layer 13 and the wicking layer 14. This provides a dry surface closest to the user, since the spaces between the fibres in the liquid acquisition portion 11, 13 are essentially emptied of liquid.

15 The superabsorbent in the liquid acquisition portion 11, 13 should have a high gel strength, so that an open fibre structure is retained in this portion even after wetting, and it is an advantage if it has a relatively low 20 absorption rate. The liquid acquisition portion 11, 13 can of course be completely free of superabsorbents.

The storage layer, as well, preferably contains super- 25 absorbent, between 2 and 80%, preferably between 10 and 50%, computed on the total dry weight of the layer. The superabsorbent in the form of flakes, fibres, granules, powder or the like is either mixed with the fibre material or applied in the form of one or more layers between the layers of fibres. The superabsorbent is 30 either evenly distributed in the storage layer 12 or with varying concentration across the length and/or thickness of the absorbent body.

35 It is also conceivable to have as a storage layer 12 an essentially pure layer of superabsorbent.

The superabsorbent in the storage layer 12 has preferably a high absorption capacity under pressure, i.e. a capacity to swell essentially unaffected by normally occurring compressive forces, in order to not block or 5 impede the dispersion of liquid. What characterizes these superabsorbents is a high degree of cross-linking, which makes them more difficult to press together in comparison with a gel with a lower degree of cross-linking.

10 The storage layer 12 can, of course, also be completely free of superabsorbent.

The wicking layer 14 is preferably free of or contains very small amounts of superabsorbent.

15 The exuded body liquid, in this case urine, can be rapidly absorbed by the liquid acquisition portion 11, 13, and be spread either directly or via the wicking layer 14 onto the second absorption layer 12, where it is stored.

20 The difference in capillary size between the fibre materials in the liquid acquisition portion 11, 13 and the storage layer 12 creates a suction directly from the liquid acquisition portion 11, 13 towards the storage layer 12 or the wicking layer 14.

25 The liquid acquisition portion 11, 13 is drained of liquid and is prepared to receive the next dose of liquid. The storage layer 12 has a capacity for storing several doses of liquid.

30 The well 13 can have varying shape and size. It is important, however, that it has a portion which is located in the assumed wetting area of the absorbent body, i.e. is displaced toward the front portion thereof. 35 The well 13 can extend transversely to the absorbent body out to the longitudinal lateral edges 15, 16, as is shown in Fig. 6, or terminate inside them, as is shown in

Fig. 2. In both of the examples, the well 13 is located only in the front portion of the absorbent body and terminates slightly inside its front edge 17. It is, however, conceivable that the well 13 extend up to the front edge and that it even extend somewhat into the rear portion of the absorbent body, possibly to its rear edge 18.

According to an additional variant, the absorbent body has two or more wells. Such an embodiment is shown in Figs. 8 and 9. An advantage of having several small wells 13 instead of one big well is that the wetting area of a diaper may vary depending on whether the user is lying or sitting and it also varies between males and females. With more than one well, the risk that the urine will strike the absorbent body outside the well is reduced. A small well is also more rapidly drained from liquid than a big well, which is a further advantage. The wells may also have different sizes in different areas of the absorbent body.

The absorbent materials described above have only fibre based structures. It is, however, possible according to the invention, to use other types of porous absorbent materials, such as polymer foams, for example polyester, polyurethane, polyolefines, viscose, etc., or porous polymeric macro structures. The desired pore size difference between the liquid acquisition portion and the storage portion can be achieved simply with such materials as well. Even combinations of fibre and foam materials can be used.

By pore size is meant here the effective mean pore size which the structure has in dry state. A measuring method for determining and measuring the effective mean pore size in a fibre structure is described in EP-A-0,470,392. An alternative embodiment involves the use as a liquid

acquisition portion, especially as a well 13, a hard compressed material, which expands when wetted. Repeated wettings will thus give it an expanded and increased pore volume. Examples of such materials are compressed dry formed sheet pulp, compressed structures of chemically stiffened cellulose fibres and compressed thermal bound fibre structures, where wetting breaks the thermal bonds and the structure is allowed to expand.

10 A few comparative tests are described below comparing an absorbent body according to the invention with an absorbent body without a well 13.

Examples

15 The instantaneous absorption and rewetting were tested for two fluff pulp bodies A and B 10 x 28 cm, each consisting of an upper layer of CTMP pulp of soft wood, a storage layer located thereunder of chemical pulp of soft wood and thereunder a dispersion layer of chemical pulp
20 of soft wood. The upper layer of the sample body A contained 1.2 g of superabsorbent, essentially homogeneously mixed with the fluff pulp fibres, while the upper layer of the sample body B contained 0.8 g of the same superabsorbent, essentially homogeneously mixed. The surface
25 weight of the upper layer in the sample body A was 400 g/m². The surface weight in the upper layer in the sample body B was 200 g/m². The sample body B had a well of the same material and density as the upper layer. The well had a cross-sectional area in the form of a circle
30 with the diameter 9 cm. The mean density of the sample body B in the well area was 0.07 g/cm³, while the mean density outside the well area was 0.11 g/cm³.

35 The storage layer in the sample body A had a surface weight of 600 g/m² and a density of 0.125 g/cm³. Immediately thereunder, i.e. between the storage layer and the wicking layer, there was supplied a layer of 4.5

g of superabsorbent. The surface weight of the wicking layer was 300 g/m². The mean density of the sample body A was 0.2 g/cm³.

5 The storage layer in the sample body B had a surface weight of 500 g/m², a density of 0.125 g/cm³ and contained 4.6 g of the same superabsorbent as the sample body A, essentially homogeneously mixed into the fluff pulp. The wicking layer in the sample layer B had a 10 surface weight of 250 g/m².

Instantaneous absorption

Four additions of each 60 ml of liquid (0,9% NaCl solution) were made at a certain time interval. The time 15 it took until all the liquid was absorbed was measured (visual observation). The result is shown in Fig. 10 in the form of a bar graph. The sample body B had a substantially better instantaneous absorption than the sample body A, especially at the second, third and forth 20 wetting. The sample body B retained its rapid instantaneous absorption during the repeated wettings.

Rewetting

25 The rewetting was measured just before the forth liquid addition by a filter paper being placed over the wetting point and being loaded with a weight of 1.1 kg (2.8 kPa) for 15 seconds. The filter papers were weighed before and after the loading and the rewetting was noted. The sample body A had a rewetting of 3.5 g and the sample body B had 30 a rewetting of 2.3 g, i.e. there was a lower degree of rewetting for sample body B.

In conclusion, the tests show a significantly improved 35 instantaneous absorption, especially upon repeated wetting, for the sample body containing the liquid acquisition well according to the invention. Furthermore, it had a lower rewetting. Thus, the invention has

achieved an absorbent body with very good absorption properties.

CLAIMS

1. Absorbent body in an absorbent product, such as a diaper, incontinence pad, sanitary napkin or the like, said absorbent body comprising a liquid acquisition portion (11, 13) and a liquid storage portion (12) adjacent thereto, characterized in that said liquid acquisition portion comprises a cover layer (11) which covers at least substantial portions of the liquid storage portion (12), and at least one well (13) located at the assumed wetting area of the absorbent body, said well extending depth-wise into the underlying liquid storage portion (12), that there is arranged in the liquid acquisition portion (11, 13) a first absorbent structure, which has a first effective mean pore size, and that in the liquid storage portion (12) there is arranged a second absorbent portion which has a second effective mean pore size which is less than the first mean pore size.
2. Absorbent body according to Claim 1, characterized in that the cover layer (11) of the liquid acquisition portion and the well (13) are integrated with each other and consist of the same type of material.
3. Absorbent body according to Claim 1, characterized in that the cover layer (11) of the liquid acquisition portion and its well (13) consist of different types of material.
4. Absorbent body according to one or more of the preceding Claims, characterized in that the first and/or the second absorbent structure comprise(s) hydrophilic fibre material.

5. Absorbent body according to one or more of the preceding Claims, characterized in that the first and/or the second absorbent structure comprise(s) polymer foam material.

5

6. Absorbent body according to Claim 4 or 5, characterized in that the liquid acquisition portion (11, 13) has a lower density than the liquid storage portion (12).

10

7. Absorbent body according to Claim 4, characterized in that the liquid acquisition portion (11, 13) has a density of 0.02-0.2 g/cm³, preferably 0.06-0.15 g/cm³, and the liquid storage portion (12) has a density of 0.1-1.0 g/cm³, preferably 0.12-0.6 g/cm³.

15

8. Absorbent body according to Claims 4, 6 or 7, characterized in that the fibre material in the liquid acquisition portion (11, 13) has an open fibre structure and a low liquid dispersability, and that the fibre material in the liquid storage portion (12) has a higher liquid dispersability than the fibre material in the liquid acquisition portion (11, 13).

20

25. Absorbent body according to Claim 8, characterized in that the major portion of the fibre material in the liquid acquisition portion (11, 13) consists of mechanical pulp, thermo-mechanical pulp, chemo-thermo-mechanical pulp, pulp of chemically stiffened cellulose fibres, synthetic fibres or mixtures thereof.

30

35. Absorbent body according to one or more of Claims 6-9, characterized in that the major portion of the fibre material in the liquid storage portion (12) consists of chemical pulp.

11. Absorbent body according to one or more of

Claims 6-9, characterized in that the major portion of the fibre material in the liquid storage portion (12) consists of dry formed sheet pulp.

5 12. Absorbent body according to one or more of the preceding Claims, characterized in that the liquid acquisition portion (11, 13) contains between 0 and 30%, preferably between 2 and 15% superabsorbent material computed on the dry total weight of the portion.

10 13. Absorbent body according to one or more of the preceding Claims, characterized in that the liquid storage portion (12) contains between 2 and 80%, preferably between 10 and 50% superabsorbent material computed on the dry total weight of the portion.

15 14. Absorbent body according to Claim 1, characterized in that the liquid storage portion (12) consists of a layer of superabsorbent material in particle form.

20 15. Absorbent body according to one or more of the preceding claims, characterized in, that it comprises two or more wells (13) distributed over the assumed wetting area of the absorbent body.

30 16. Absorbent body according to one or more of the preceding Claims, characterized in that on the side of the liquid storage portion (12) which faces away from the liquid acquisition layer (11), there is arranged a liquid wicking layer (14) which is in liquid communication with the well (13).

35 17. Absorbent body according to Claim 16, characterized in that the well (13) of the liquid acquisition portion (11, 13) extends entirely through the

liquid storage portion (12) and is in direct contact with the wicking layer (14).

18. Absorbent body according to Claim 16, characterized in that between the well (13) and the wicking layer (14) there is arranged a layer (19) of a material with high liquid absorption capacity and wet resilience, alternatively a capacity to swell in wet state, e.g. synthetic fibre material, polymer foam material, cellulose fibres of mechanical, thermo-mechanical or chemo-thermo-mechanical pulp, pulp of chemically stiffened cellulose fibres or dry formed compressed sheet pulp.

19. Absorbent body according to one or more of the preceding Claims, characterized in that the cover layer (11) has a portion (11b) adjacent to the well (13), said portion having a higher density than the adjacent portions of the cover layer (11a).

20. Absorbent body according to Claim 19, characterized in that the rear portion (11a) of the cover layer (11), as seen in the use position of the absorbent body, has a lower density than said more compressed portion (11b), and that said rear portion (11a) is separated from the well by means of a margin of said more compressed portion (11b).

21. Absorbent body according to Claim 20, characterized in that said margin (11b) extends in the longitudinal direction of the absorbent body between 5 and 50 mm.

22. Absorbent product such as a diaper, incontinence protector, sanitary napkin or the like, comprising an absorbent body according to one or more of Claims 1-19

enclosed between a liquid permeable jacket (3) and a liquid impermeable jacket (2).

AMENDED CLAIMS

[received by the International Bureau on 31 May 1995 (31.05.95);
original claim 1 amended; remaining claims unchanged. (1 page)]

1. Absorbent body in an absorbent product, such as a diaper, incontinence pad, sanitary napkin or the like, said absorbent body comprising a liquid acquisition portion (11, 13) and a liquid storage portion (12) adjacent thereto, characterized in that said liquid acquisition portion comprises at least one well (13) located at the assumed wetting area of the absorbent body, said well extending depth-wise into the underlying liquid storage portion (12), as well as a cover layer (11) which covers at least substantial portions of the liquid storage portion (12), and that in the liquid storage portion (12) there is arranged a first absorbent structure, which has a first effective mean pore size, and that there is arranged in the liquid acquisition portion (11, 13) including the well(s) one or more second absorbent structures, each one having a larger effective mean pore size than the first mean pore size.

2. Absorbent body according to Claim 1, characterized in that the cover layer (11) of the liquid acquisition portion and the well (13) are integrated with each other and consist of the same type of material.

3. Absorbent body according to Claim 1, characterized in that the cover layer (11) of the liquid acquisition portion and its well (13) consist of different types of material.

4. Absorbent body according to one or more of the preceding Claims, characterized in that the first and/or the second absorbent structure comprise(s) hydrophilic fibre material.

AMENDED SHEET (ARTICLE 19)

STATEMENT UNDER ARTICLE 19

Claim 1 on the enclosed replacement sheet 15 has been amended to correspond with the new Claim 1 filed in the priority application 9304320-6. The amended Claim 1 should clarify both that the well or wells are not empty holes but contain absorbent structures and that the liquid acquisition portion including the well(s) may consist of more than one structure.

1/4

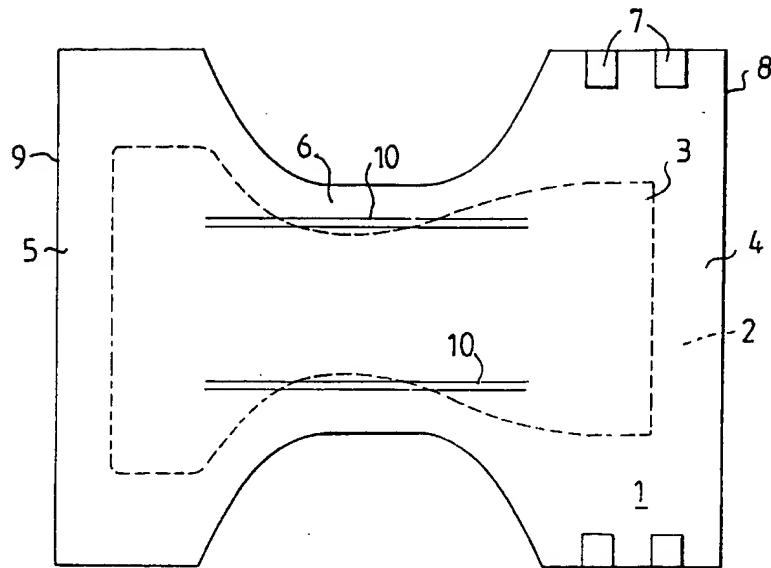


FIG. 1

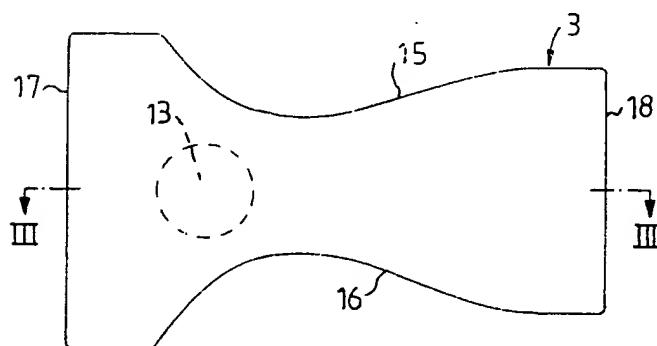


FIG. 2

2/4

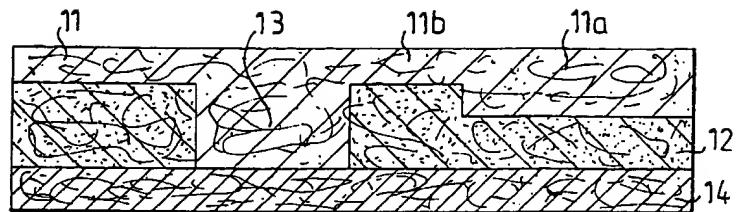


FIG. 3

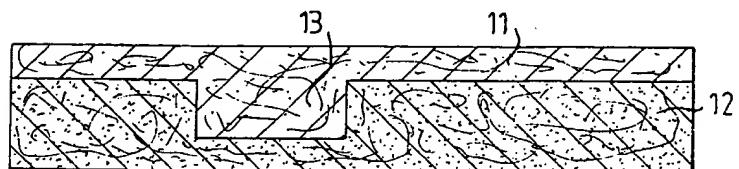


FIG. 4

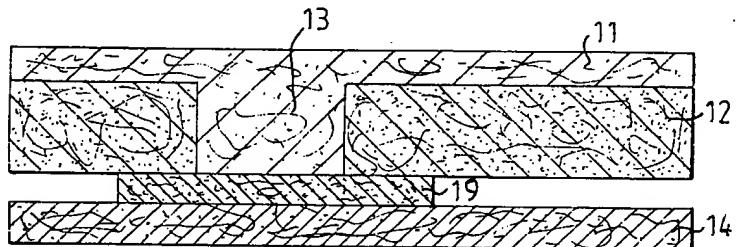


FIG. 5

3/4

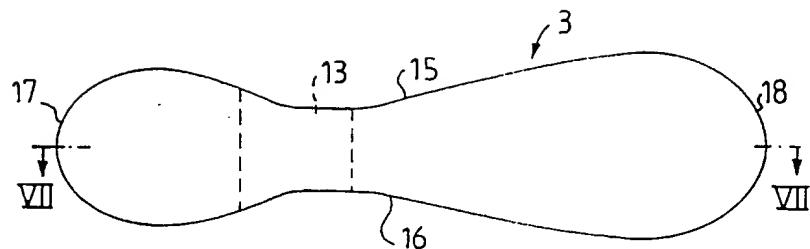


FIG. 6

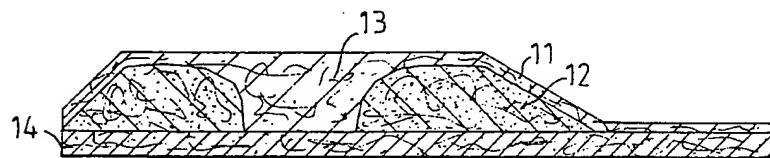


FIG. 7

INSTANTANEOUS
ABSORPTION
(s)

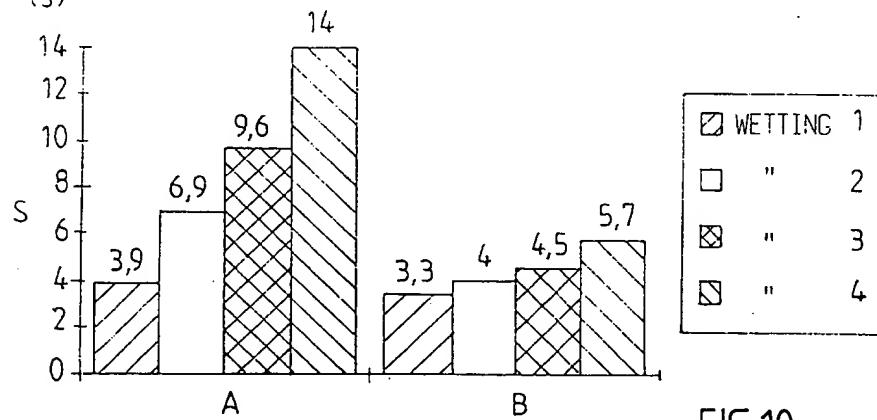


FIG. 10

4/4

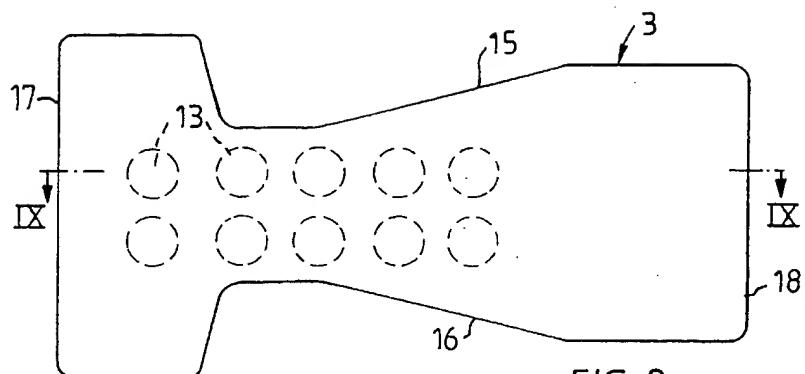


FIG. 8

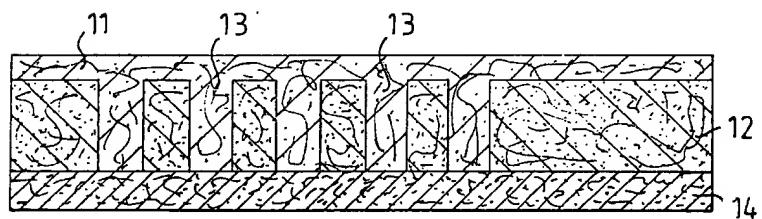


FIG. 9

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/SE 94/01258

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER		
IPC6: A61F 13/15 According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC		
B. FIELDS SEARCHED		
Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)		
IPC6: A61F		
Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched		
SE,DK,FI,NO classes as above		
Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)		
C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	EP, A2, 0536941 (HERCULES INCORPORATED), 14 April 1993 (14.04.93), page 4, line 37 - line 53, figure 2 --	1,22
X	US, A, 4501586 (D.C. HOLTMAN), 26 February 1985 (26.02.85), column 3, line 4 - column 4, line 11, figure 2 --	1,22
A	EP, A1, 0354196 (MÖLNLYCKE AB), 7 February 1990 (07.02.90), column 3, line 21 - line 32 -- -----	1-22
<input type="checkbox"/> Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> See patent family annex.		
* Special categories of cited documents: "A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance "B" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date "L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified) "O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means "P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed "T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention "X" document of particular relevance: the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone "Y" document of particular relevance: the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art "&" document member of the same patent family		
Date of the actual completion of the international search	Date of mailing of the international search report	
30 March 1995	13 -04- 1995	
Name and mailing address of the ISA/ Swedish Patent Office Box 5055, S-102 42 STOCKHOLM Facsimile No. +46 8 666 02 86	Authorized officer May Hallne Telephone No. +46 8 782 25 00	

Form PCT/ISA/210 (second sheet) (July 1992)

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

25/02/95

International application No.

PCT/SE 94/01258

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)		Publication date
EP-A2- 0536941	14/04/93	JP-A-	5228175	07/09/93
		US-A-	5330457	19/07/94
		US-A-	5334177	02/08/94
US-A- 4501586	26/02/85	AU-B-	549282	23/01/86
		AU-A-	7750781	27/05/82
		CA-A-	1185051	09/04/85
		DE-A-	3145398	16/09/82
		GB-A,B-	2087730	03/06/82
EP-A1- 0354196	07/02/90	AU-A-	3856089	23/01/90
		SE-B-	461440	19/02/90
		SE-A-	8802448	30/12/89
		WO-A-	9000041	11/01/90

Form PCT/ISA/210 (parent family annex) (July 1992)

THIS PAGE BLANK (upper)